

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Simile -- uses *like* or *as*, to compare things that seem to have little or nothing in common.

- The lake reflects the mountains *like* a mirror.
 - The sunlight poured over them *like* a warm bath.
 - I wandered lonely *as* a cloud.
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Metaphor -- comparison that states (or suggests) that two very different things are the same or have something in common. They do not use *like* or *as*, they just make the comparison directly.

- A book is a ship that takes you to distant lands.
 - The treetops were a soft sea of green.
 - You are an oak. (stubborn, old, set in ways)
 - I am a lonely cloud.
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Personification -- a type of comparison that gives human qualities to an object, animal, or idea.

- The wind whistled.
 - The engine coughed and sputtered.
 - The city shivered during the snowstorm.
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Alliteration -- the repetition of consonant sounds in words that appear close together (usually the first letter of a word).

- Peter piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
 - I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet.
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Onomatopoeia -- the use of words that sound exactly like what they mean.

- snap
 - crackle
 - pop
 - bang
 - hiss
 - sizzle
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Hyperbole: An extravagant exaggeration.
"My backpack weighs a ton!"

Onomatopoeia: The formation or use of words such as buzz or murmur that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions to which they refer.

The rusty spigot
sputters,
utters
a splutter,
spatters a smattering of drops,
gashes wider;
slash,
splatters,
scatters,
spurts,
finally stops sputtering
and splash!
gushes rushes splashes
clear water dashes.
by Eve Merriam

RIDING ON THE TRAIN

I see
fences and fields
barns and bridges
stations and stores
trees
other trains
horses and hills
water tanks
towers
streams
old cars
old men
roofs
raindrops crawling backwards on the window

I hear
ruggety-ruggety
squeakety-squeakety
rumbledy-rumbledy
woonh, WOONH!
Wil – ming – tonnnnnnn

I feel
my leg jiggling
my bottom bouncing
my shoulders shaking
my head rolling
I'm getting s l e

e
e
e
p y

FUN

The pedal on our school piano squeaks
And one day Miss Allen stopped playing
And we stopped singing
And Mr. Cobb came with the skinny, silver can
And gave it a long, greasy drink
And the next day when we got ready to sing
Miss Allen smiled

and blinked her eyes
and plinked the piano
and pushed the pedal

And the pedal said

SQUEEEEEEEAK!

And we laughed

But Miss Allen didn't

Eloise Greenfield

Hyperbole

JIMMY JET AND HIS TV SET

SCREAMIN' MILLIE

Millie McDeevit screamed a scream
So loud it made her eyebrows steam.
She screamed so loud her jawbone broke,
Her tongue caught fire, her nostrils smoked,
Her eyeballs boiled and then popped out,
Her ears flew north, her nose went south,
Her teeth flew out, her voice was wrecked,
Her head went sailing off her neck—
Over the hillside, 'cross the stream,
Into the skies it chased the scream.
And that's what happened to Millie McDeevit
(At least I hope all you screamers believe it).

Shel Silverstein



I'll tell you the story of Jimmy Jet—
And you know what I tell you is true.
He loved to watch his TV set
Almost as much as you.

He watched all day, he watched all night
Till he grew pale and lean,
From "The Early Show" to "The Late Late Show"
And all the shows between.

He watched till his eyes were frozen wide,
And his bottom grew into his chair.
And his chin turned into a tuning dial,
And antennae grew out of his hair.

And his brains turned into TV tubes,
And his face to a TV screen.
And two knobs saying "VERT." and "HORIZ."
Grew where his ears had been.

And he grew a plug that looked like a tail
So we plugged in little Jim.
And now instead of him watching TV
We all sit around and watch him.

Hyperbole:

"My sister uses so much makeup,...

"she broke a chisel trying to get it off last night!" *Johnny, from Prescott Middle School, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA*

- "Marilyn Manson freaked out when he saw her!" *Nizam, from Bukit Panjang Gov't H. S., Singapore*
- "she has to use a sandblaster to get it off at night." *Margaret*
- "that I haven't seen her real face for years ..." *Nivedita*
- "when she smiles her cheeks fall off." *Ed*

"My dog is so ugly,...

"We had to pay the fleas to live on him!" *Demi & Cynthia, from Larose Middle School, in Larose, Louisiana, USA*

- "he has to sneak up on his dish to eat". *Ivan, from Buffalo, NY, USA*
- "we have to pay people to pet him" *Bobby*

Alliteration is the repetition of initial consonant sounds in neighboring words.

Acquainted with the Night

I have been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain—and back in rain.
I have out walked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.
I have passed by the watchman on his beat
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet
When far away an interrupted cry
Came over houses from another street,

But not to call me back or say good-by;
And further still at an unearthly height
One luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.
I have been one acquainted with the night.

by Robert Frost

Tongue Twisters

A tree toad loved a she-toad
Who lived up in a tree.
He was a two-toed tree toad
But a three-toed toad was she.
The two-toed tree toad tried to
win
The three-toed she-toad's
heart,
For the two-toed tree toad
loved the ground
That the three-toed tree toad
trod.
But the two-toed tree toad
tried in vain.
He couldn't please her whim.
From her tree toad bower
With her three-toed power
The she-toad vetoed him.

Bobby Baxter burst a bubble
Bobby's brother Boris blew.
Bobby's brother started
balling
Boris cried, boo hòo, boo hoo.

Personification: Type of metaphor in which a nonhuman thing or quality is talked about as if it were human.

Examples:

a smiling moon
a dying river
friendly sycamores
the pencil danced about the paper
the rock slept peacefully by the riverbed
the ancient car groaned into third gear
the tropical storm slept for two days

Examples of Personification:

The ancient car groaned into third gear.
The cloud scattered rain throughout the city.
The tropical storm slept for two days.
April showers scrub the air.
The rain kissed my cheeks as it fell.

Summer Grass
Carl Sandburg

Summer grass aches and whispers.

It wants something; it calls and sings;

It pours out wishes to the overhead stars.

The rain hears; the rain answers;
the rain is

Slow coming; the rain wets the
face of the grass.

Mirror

Sylvia Plath

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.
What ever you see I swallow immediately
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.
I am not cruel, only truthful---
The eye of a little god, four-cornered.
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is a part of my heart. But it flickers.
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.

Similes: The child was quiet as a mouse.

The road looked like a ribbon of black.

Willow and Ginkgo

Eve Merriam

The willow is like an etching,
Fine-lined against the sky.
The ginkgo is like a crude sketch,
Hardly worthy to be signed.
The willow's music is like a soprano,
Delicate and thin.
The ginkgo's tune is like a chorus
With everyone joining in.

The willow is sleek as a velvet-nosed calf;
The ginkgo is leathery as an old bull.
The willow's branches are like silken thread;
The ginkgo's like stubby rough wool.

The willow is like a nymph with streaming hair;
Wherever it grows, there is green and gold and fair.
The willow dips to the water,
Protected and precious, like the king's favorite daughter.

The ginkgo forces its way through gray concrete;
Like a city child, it grows up in the street.
Thrust against the metal sky,
Somehow it survives and even thrives.
My eyes feast upon the willow,
But my heart goes to the ginkgo.

Metaphor: The child was a quiet mouse.

The road was a ribbon of black.

They drove along the black ribbon of highway.

Fog
Carl Sandburg

The fog comes
on little cat feet.

It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.

UNDER THE HARVEST MOON

Under the harvest moon,
When the soft silver
Drips shimmering
Over the garden nights,
Death, the gray mocker,
Comes and whispers to you
As a beautiful friend
Who remembers.

Under the summer roses
When the flagrant crimson
Lurks in the dusk
Of the wild red leaves,
Love, with little hands,
Comes and touches you
With a thousand memories,
And asks you
Beautiful, unanswerable questions.